(b) if so, whether the Coast Guard is not fully equipped to prevent any oil spill; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor and steps taken to make Coast Guard fully equipped to face any oil spill?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. The Coast Guard is equipped to combat medium sized oil spills and have recently contained such spills effectively in the Andaman Sea and Off Bombay High. The strengthening of the Coast Guard is done as per the Coast Guard Development Plans, subject to the availability of funds.

Crash of MI-8 Helicopter

1433. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what is the outcome of the inquiry conducted into the circumstances leading to the crash of MI-8 helicopter soon after its take off from Ha airbase in Bhutan killing GOC-in-C, Eastern Command, his wife and other army personnel and members of the Airforce crew; and

(b) what action has since been taken by Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) As per findings of the Court of Inquiry, the most probable cause of the accident was loss of power at a critical point after take off, necessitating a forced landing. The reason for loss of power could not be ascertained due to lack of evidence as a result of extensive post impact fire. Loss of power, itself, however would not have resulted in the crash, had it not been for a logging cable, the presence of which was not known to the crew, in the direct path of the decending helicopter.

(b) As the helicopter was fully serviceable before take off, the probable cause for the loss of power could not be established. No extra measures over the already existihg comprehensive checks have therefore been prescribed.

Benefits being provided to ex-servicemen

1434. SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what are the benefits that are being provided to the Ex-Servicemen after their retirement;

(b) what are the schemes that provide for Government/Semi Government, Public Undertaking, Bank|Employment bnefits to Ex-servicemen;

(c) whether Government have drawn any special scheme for the widows and children of Ex-servicemen;

(d) what are the schemes that provide for the benefits for rehabilitation; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Ex-Servicemen, after their retirement, are being provided with the following benefits:—

(i) Free medical treatment in military hospitals to pension holders.

(ii) Canteen facilities.

(iii) Preferential admission to medical and engineering colleges as per laid down priorities.

(iv) Entired to short stay in the Sanik Rest Houses during their visit to District Headquarters.

(v) Recognition of marriage of Armed Forces personnel, after their retirement, for grant of family Pensiob.

(vi) Allotment of disposable surplus vehicles.

(vii) Financial assistance to needy ex-Servicemen.